

Announcement of an effort to restore water quality in Levisa Fork and Bull Creek in Buchanan County, Virginia

**PUBLIC MEETING LOCATION:** The meeting will be held at Riverview Elementary School on U.S. Route 460 west of Grundy, Virginia on January 14, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. (in case of inclement weather the snow date for the meeting is January 21, 2010 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.)

**PURPOSE OF NOTICE:** To seek public comment and announce a public meeting on two water quality improvement studies by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Mines Minerals and Energy and the Department of Conservation and Recreation for the Levisa Fork and Bull Creek in Southwest Virginia.

**MEETING DESCRIPTION:** Final public meeting on two studies to restore water quality.

**DESCRIPTION OF STUDY:** DEQ has been working to identify sources of pollutants affecting the aquatic organisms and sources of bacteria and PCB contamination in the waters of the Levisa Fork including Slate Creek and Bull Creek. The “impaired” stream segments are estimated to be approximately 41 miles of the Levisa Fork and Slate Creek. The stream is impaired for failing to meet the *Aquatic Life Use* (benthic impairment) based on violations of the general standard for aquatic organisms and failure to meet the *Recreational Use* because of fecal coliform bacteria violations. Levisa Fork was also found to have elevated levels of polychlorinated byphenyl (PCBs)

in fish tissue. The bacteria impairment extends from the mainstem of the Levisia Fork headwaters downstream to the Slate Cr. confluence and from the Bull Cr. confluence downstream to the Kentucky state line. The bacteria impairment includes Slate Cr. from the Upper Rockhouse Branch confluence downstream to the confluence with Levisa Fork. The benthic impairment extends from the mainstem of the Levisa Fork at the confluence with Garden Cr. downstream to the confluence of Bull Cr. and from the Rocklick Branch confluence downstream to the Kentucky state line. The benthic impairment includes Slate Cr. the mainstem from the Upper Rockhouse Branch confluence downstream to the confluence with Levisa Fork. The PCB impairment begins at the headwaters and continues downstream to the Kentucky state line and includes Garden Cr. from the confluence of Right Fork downstream to the confluence with Levisa Fork.

A separate study includes 16.9 miles of Bull Creek, from the headwaters to the confluence with Levisa Fork, and all tributaries; Belcher Branch, Deel Fork, Burnt Poplar Branch, Big Branch, Starr Branch, Jess Fork, and Convict Hollow. The stream is impaired for failing to meet the *Aquatic Life Use* based on violations of the general standard for aquatic organisms. The stream is impaired for failing to meet the *Aquatic Life Use* (benthic impairment) based on violations of the general standard for aquatic organisms.

The pollutants impairing the aquatic community been identified and total maximum daily loads, or TMDLs, have been developed for the impaired waters. A TMDL is the total

amount of a pollutant a water body can contain and still meet water quality standards. DEQ has also determined the sources of bacteria contamination and develop a TMDL for bacteria. To restore water quality, contamination levels must be reduced to the TMDL amount. The draft documents will be presented at the public meeting.

**HOW A DECISION IS MADE:** The development of a TMDL includes public meetings and a public comment period for the draft study report. After public comments have been considered and addressed, DEQ will submit the TMDL report to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for approval.

**HOW TO COMMENT:** DEQ accepts written comments by e-mail, fax or postal mail. Written comments should include the name, address and telephone number of the person commenting and be received by DEQ during the comment period, January 14, 2010 to February 15, 2010. DEQ also accepts written and oral comments at the public meeting announced in this notice.

**TO REVIEW DRAFT TMDL REPORT:** The draft TMDL reports on the impaired waters are available after January 13, 2010 from the contact below or on the DEQ web site at [www.deq.virginia.gov/tmdl](http://www.deq.virginia.gov/tmdl).

**CONTACT FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

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